

City of Santa Fe, New Mexico

memo

DATE: September 23, 2025

TO: Historic Districts Review Board

VIA: Heather Lamboy, Planning & Land Use Department Director 
Maggie Moore, Assistant Land Use Director 
Gary Moquino, Historic Preservation Division Manager GM

FROM: Paul A. Duran, Senior Planner, Historic Preservation Division 

2025-010946-HDRB, 643 Garcia St., Downtown and Eastside Historic District, Non-contributing, Graham Hogan, agent for Michael Blum, owner, requests approval of a new 4,668 sq. ft. structure in the Recent Santa Fe design style to a height of 15'-10" where the maximum allowable height is 16'-0".

REFERENCE ATTACHMENTS (Sequentially):

CITY SUBMITTALS

District Standards & yard wall
& fence standards.

Historic Inventory Form

Zoning Review Sheet

Other: Previous Case Documents

APPLICANT SUBMITTALS

Proposal Letter

Site Plan/Floor Plan

Elevations

Photographs

Other:

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed project and finds that the application complies with Section 14-5.2(D) General Design Standards for all Historic Districts, and 14-5.2(E) Downtown and Eastside Design Standards.

Sample motions:

- a. Approve or deny Case #2025-010946 to allow new construction at 643 Garcia Street.
- b. Approve or deny Case #2025-010946 to allow new construction at 643 Garcia Street subject to conditions.

Should the Board deny the application request, the applicant shall return with an alternative proposal for review and approval before proceeding to a building permit.

The property lies within the River and Trails Archaeological Review District. See Chapter 14, SFCC, Article 14-3.13(B)(2). There may be archaeological concerns associated with this project, and archaeological clearance may be required.

BACKGROUND & SUMMARY:

The vacant lot addressed as 643 Garcia Street is located within the Downtown and Eastside Historic District. The proposed single-family residence is approximately 4,668 sq. ft. of roofed area on 0.60-acres. The property is within in the 3-lot Windmill Hill subdivision which includes an established residence on Lot 1 and another single-family residence on Lot 3 which went before the Historic Districts Review Board (HDRB) in 2024. The subdivision is set back from Garcia Street and is accessed via a private drive. The site is further concealed behind an existing 8’ high coyote fence along the subdivision’s north, east, and south boundaries.

The proposed residence is composed of multi-blocked tiered masses from the garage up to the main structure with the highest portion of the building at the center. The proposed structure will have divided lite windows and bullnosed corners consistent with the streetscape study at a minimum of 3-inches. Several outdoor-covered open spaces are proposed. A cistern is proposed to be attached to the building to provide landscape irrigation.

APPLICANT’S REQUEST:

The applicant proposes the following exterior alterations:

- 1) The construction of approximately 4,668 sq. ft. two-story main structure and garage to a height of 15’-10” where the maximum allowable is 16’-0”. The structure is designed to meet the Recent Santa Fe Style design standards.
- 2) The new structure will be one story for the main structure and two-stories for the garage, with a flat roof, STO elastomeric stucco color El Rey suede, with wood accents, and Santa Fe River cobble walls and cistern.
- 3) Construct a rainwater cistern to the height of 15’.

RELEVANT CODE CITATIONS:

14-5.2 HISTORIC DISTRICTS

(A) General Provisions

(1) General Purpose

In order to promote the economic, cultural, and general welfare of the people of the *city* and to ensure the harmonious, orderly and efficient growth and *development* of the *city*

, it is deemed essential by the *governing body* that the qualities relating to the history of Santa Fe, and a harmonious outward appearance, which preserve *property* values and attract tourists and residents alike, be preserved, some of these qualities being:

- (a) The continued existence and *preservation* of historical areas and *buildings*;
- (b) The continued construction of *buildings* in the historic styles; and
- (c) A general harmony as to style, form, color, height, proportion, texture and material between *buildings* of historic design and those of more modern design.

(E) Downtown and Eastside Design Standards

The *governing body* recognizes that a style of architecture has evolved within the *city* from the year 1600 to the present characterized by construction with *adobe*, hereafter called "old Santa Fe style", and that another style has evolved, hereafter called "recent Santa Fe style", which is a *development* from, and an elaboration of the old Santa Fe style, with different materials and frequently with added decorations.

(1) Old Santa Fe Style

Old Santa Fe style, characterized by construction with *adobe*, is defined as including the so-called "pueblo" or "pueblo-Spanish" or "Spanish-Indian" and "territorial" styles and is more specifically described as follows:

- (a) With rare exception, *buildings* are of one *story*, few have three stories, and the characteristic effect is that the *buildings* are long and low. Roofs are flat with a slight *slope* and surrounded on at least three sides by a firewall of the same color and material as the *walls* or of brick. Roofs are never carried out beyond the line of the *walls* except to cover an enclosed *portal* or *porch* formed by setting back a portion of the *wall* or to form an exterior *portal*, the outer edge of the roof being supported by wooden columns. Two- *story* construction is more common in the territorial than in other sub-styles, and is preferably accompanied by a balcony at the level of the floor of the second *story*. Façades are flat, varied by inset *portales*, exterior *portales*, projecting vigas or roof beams, canales or water-spouts, flanking buttresses and wooden lintels, architraves and cornices, which, as well as doors, are frequently carved and the carving may be picked out with bright colors. Arches are almost never used except for nonfunctional arches, often slightly ogive, over gateways in freestanding *walls*;
- (b) All exterior *walls* of a *building* are painted alike. The colors range from a light earth color to a dark earth color. The exception to this rule is the protected space under *portales*, or in church-derived designs, inset panels in a *wall* under the roof, in which case the roof overhangs the panel. These spaces may be painted white or a contrasting color, or have mural decorations;
- (c) Solid *wall* space is always greater in any façade than window and door space combined. Single panes of glass larger than thirty (30) inches in any dimension are not permissible except as otherwise provided in this section;
- (d) The rule as to flat roofs shall not be construed to prevent the construction of skylights or installation of air conditioning devices, or any other necessary roof *structures*, but such *structures* other than chimneys, flues, vents and aerals, shall

be so placed as to be concealed by the firewall from the view of anyone standing in the *street* on which the *building* fronts;

- (e) True old Santa Fe style *buildings* are made of *adobe* with mud plaster finish. Construction with masonry blocks, bricks, or other materials with which the *adobe* effect can be simulated is permissible; provided, that the exterior *walls* are not less than eight (8) inches thick and that geometrically straight façade lines are avoided. Mud plaster or hard plaster simulating *adobe*, laid on smoothly, is required; and
- (f) It is characteristic of old Santa Fe style commercial *buildings* to place a *portal* so that it covers the entire sidewalk, the columns being set at the curb line.

(2) Recent Santa Fe Style

Recent Santa Fe style intends to achieve harmony with historic *buildings* by *retention* of a similarity of materials, color, proportion, and general detail. The dominating effect is to be that of *adobe* construction, prescribed as follows:

- (a) No *building* shall be over two stories in height in any façade unless the façade shall include projecting or recessed *portales*, *setbacks* or other design elements;
- (b) The combined door and window area in any *publicly visible* façade shall not exceed forty percent of the total area of the façade except for doors or windows located under a *portal*. No door or window in a *publicly visible* façade shall be located nearer than three (3) feet from the corner of the façade;
- (c) No cantilevers shall be permitted except over projecting vigas, beams, or wood corbels, or as part of the roof *treatment* described below;
- (d) No less than eighty percent of the surface area of any *publicly visible* façade shall be *adobe* finish, or stucco simulating *adobe* finish. The balance of the *publicly visible* façade, except as above, may be of natural stone, wood, brick, tile, terra cotta, or other material, subject to approval as hereinafter provided for *building permits*;
- (e) The *publicly visible* façade of any *building* and of any adjoining *walls* shall, except as otherwise provided, be of one color, which color shall simulate a light earth or dark earth color, matte or dull finish and of relatively smooth texture. Façade surfaces under *portales* may be of contrasting or complimentary colors. Windows, doors and *portals* on *publicly visible* portions of the *building* and *walls* shall be of one of the old Santa Fe styles; except that *buildings* with *portals* may have larger plate glass areas for windows under *portals* only. Deep window recesses are characteristic; and
- (f) Flat roofs shall have not more than thirty (30) inches overhang.